

LESSON TITLE: COMMUNICATION

A. TRAINING OBJECTIVE

- TASK:** Know the correct, safe, and legal methods of communication.
- CONDITIONS:** Given instruction in a classroom.
- STANDARD:** Correctly answer verbal questions when called upon.

B. INTERMEDIATE TRAINING. None.

C. ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

1. Training time: Recommended instructional time is 0.5 hours.
2. Training location: Scheduled classroom.
3. Training type: Conference.
4. Students: Scheduled personnel.
5. Principal and assistant instructors required: One primary instructor for each class of 20 students.
6. Training aids and equipment: Overhead projector, transparencies, and screen.
7. References: FM 21-305.

D. SEQUENCE OF ACTIVITY

1. INTRODUCTION.

a. **Interest Device.** When we do not communicate early with others it causes misunderstandings. Communication should be thought of as an exchange of information. On the road, the consequence of poor communication – or lack of communication – is potentially much greater: a crash.

b. **Tie-in.** You can influence the behavior of other drivers by communicating your intentions.

c. **Lesson Objective.**

ACTION: After this lesson the student will know the correct, safe, and legal methods of communication.

CONDITIONS: Given instruction in a classroom.

STANDARD: Correctly answer verbal questions when called upon.

d. **Procedures.**

(1) *Explanation.*

(2) *Summary.*

2. **EXPLANATION.**

a. **Communicating Means.**

Transparency 4-46

(1) Letting others know where you are by:

- Using your headlights, brake lights, and turn signals.
- Using your horn.
- Positioning your vehicle so that it can be seen.
- Using emergency signals (flares and/or warning triangles).
- Using emergency hazard signals (4-way flashers).

(2) Letting others know what you plan to do by signaling:

- Changes of direction.
- When slowing or stopping.

Transparency 4-47

TRANSITION: Besides helping you to see at night, headlights help other people see you.

b. **Using Headlights.**

(1) On rainy, snowy, or foggy days, it is sometimes impossible for other drivers to see your vehicle. On gray days, vehicles seem to blend into the surroundings. In these conditions, headlights make your vehicle easier to see. Also, anytime your windshield wipers are in use, your low beam headlights should be on.

- (2) Turn on your headlights when it begins to get dark. If you turn them on a little early, you will help other drivers see you.
- (3) When you are moving and lights are necessary, use your headlights. Parking lights are for parked vehicles only.
- (4) Use headlights to get attention of other drivers. An example of this is when passing other vehicles.
- (5) Flash headlights to communicate a hazard. An example of this is when you are in another vehicles blind spot. This could help prevent a collision.
- (6) The best rule to remember is to turn on your headlights whenever you have trouble seeing other vehicles. If you have trouble seeing them, chances are other drivers are having trouble seeing you.
- (7) Tactical vehicle drivers will keep low beam lights on at all times when on public roadways outside military installations, except where SOFA and local laws prohibit use of headlights during daylight hours (see AR 385-55).
- (8) Vehicle manufacturers are voluntarily equipping new vehicles with DRLs. DRLs make vehicles more conspicuous and decreases the possibility of having a head-on collision. At the time of this writing, there is some movement toward national mandate of DRLs. DRL legislation for passenger vehicles is not anticipated to become law in the immediate foreseeable future.

Transparency 4-48

TRANSITION: People cannot see you unless they are looking your way. Your horn can get their attention. Use it whenever it will help prevent an accident.

c. **Using Horn.** (When it is safe and legal to do so.)

- (1) The horn is used to give warning and not for other purposes such as intimidation.
- (2) If there is no immediate danger, a light tap on the horn should be all you need. Give your horn a light tap well in advance when:
 - You approach a person on foot or on a bike, or when you see someone walking close to the road.
 - You pass a driver who may decide to pass the vehicle in front of him. (At night a flick of the headlights may be enough.)

- Approaching a driver who is not paying attention or may have trouble seeing you.
- Coming to a place where you cannot see what is ahead – like a steep hill or a sharp curve.

(3) If there is a real danger, do not be afraid to sound a sharp blast on your horn when:

- A child is about to run into the street.
- Another vehicle is in danger of hitting you.
- You have lost control of your vehicle.

Transparency 4-49

TRANSITION: Try to keep your vehicle where it can be seen. You cannot always be sure other drivers will see you, but you can avoid putting your vehicle where they cannot see it. One common mistake is driving in another driver's blind spot.

d. Keep Your Vehicle Where it Can be Seen.

- (1) Try to avoid driving on either side and slightly to the rear of another vehicle for a long period of time. Either speed up or drop back so the lane is clear.
- (2) When passing another vehicle, get through the other driver's blind spot as quickly as you can. The longer you stay in the blind spot, the longer you are in danger.

Transparency 4-50

TRANSITION: If your vehicle breaks down on the highway, make sure that other drivers can see your vehicle. Accidents often occur because a driver does not see a stalled or parked (meaning off the road) vehicle. By the time he does see it, it is too late to stop.

e. Using Emergency Signals.

- (1) If you are having vehicle problems, and have to stop, follow these rules:
 - If at all possible, pull off the road all the way out of traffic.
 - Turn on your emergency hazard signals (4-way flashers) to show you are not moving.
 - Lift the hood to signal an emergency and tie a white cloth on the door handle (road side of vehicle).

- If you cannot get completely off the roadway, try to stop where people have a clear view of you and your vehicle from behind. Do not stop just over a hill or just around a curve.
- Give other drivers plenty of warning. Place emergency flares or warning triangles 200 and 300 feet behind your vehicle. This allows other drivers time to change lanes if necessary.
- If you do not have emergency flares or triangles, stand by the side of the road, well back from your vehicle, and wave traffic around you.
- Do not ever try to change a tire if it means you have to stand in a traffic lane.

(2) Use 4-way flashers when unloading, at an accident scene, or traveling slow (below posted minimum speed limit or well below the posted maximum speed limit).

Transparency 4-51

TRANSITION: Other drivers expect you to keep doing what you are doing. Let others know when you are going to do something different. It gives them time to react to your moves.

f. Signal When Changing Direction.

(1) You should use your turn signals before you:

- Change lanes or pass another vehicle.
- Turn at an intersection.
- Enter or leave a freeway.
- Pull away from the curb.
- Pull over to the side of the road.
- Signal when merging into traffic.
- Signal when approaching a parallel parking place.

(2) If you do not signal, other drivers will not know what you plan to do. They may start to do something that will lead to an accident. Here are some important rules about signaling direction changes:

- Get into the habit of signaling every time you change direction. Signal even when you do not see anyone else around. It is the vehicle you do not see that is the most dangerous.
- Signal as early as you can. Signal at least three or four seconds before you make your move. If you are planning to turn at an intersection, start signaling about a half a block away.
- If you plan to turn just beyond an intersection, do not signal until you are actually in the intersection. If you signal earlier, other drivers may

think you plan to turn before you reach them. They might pull into your path.

- After you have made a gradual turn or lane change, make sure your turn signal is off. On a very gradual turn the signals may not turn off by themselves. Check your signal after turning. Turn it off if it has not clicked off by itself. If the signal is on, other drivers might think you plan to turn.

Transparency 4-52

TRANSITION: Your brake lights let people know that you are slowing down, but they do not say how much.

g. **Signal When Slowing or Stopping.** If you are going to slow down or stop at a place where another driver will not expect it, warn drivers behind you. A few light taps on the brake pedal - enough to flash the brake lights - should warn following drivers. Signal before you slow down to:

- Turn off a highway, which has no special deceleration lane.
- Park or turn into a driveway. (This is important when you do it just before reaching an intersection. The driver behind you may expect you to continue to the intersection.)
- Avoid something in the road ahead that the driver behind you cannot see. (For example, as you come over the crest of a hill and see a vehicle stalled or parked in the roadway.)

3. SUMMARY.

Transparency 4-53

a. **Recap Main Points.** Call on students to answer questions presented on Transparency 4-53.

b. **Allow for Questions.**

c. **Clarify Questions.**

d. **Give Closing Statement.** Accidents often happen because one driver does not see another driver, or when one driver does something the other driver does not expect. It is important that drivers let others know where they are and what they plan to do.

E. SAFETY RESTRICTIONS. None.

F. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND INFORMATION. None.